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A RURAL RIDE IN IRELAND.

Wishing some short time since to visit a friend in the north of Ireland, and recollecting that economy is now the order of the day, I engaged an outside place on a stage coach, and at six o'clock of a fine frosty morning, I seated myself very comfortably between a something which appeared to be "half-monkey, half-man" whose travelling cloak, buttoned *a la militaire*, over his nose, gave him much the appearance of "an owl peeping out of a bush;" and a well dressed middle aged female, who, from the complete rotundity of her figure, and her face having a wonderful resemblance to a good kitchen fire, I suspected to belong to the lower regions of some of the noble mansions of our city. By the way, these military cloaks may be very comfortable things, but I must confess, whenever I meet one of our modern heroes, with his hands and head muffled up in his cloak, it forcibly recalls to my mind the soldiers of Rome in her degenerate days, who carried their umbrellas with them to the field of battle—nor can I help contrasting them with the British hero of olden time, who disinherited his son for rolling for himself a pillow of the snow on which he reposed for the night.

Our female companion, observing that the morning was extremely cold, drew from her pocket a small bottle of something which appeared very transparent, and placing the neck of it in her mouth, in the same way that a farrier would were he administering medicine to a horse, in a moment half the contents disappeared; then, carefully replacing the cork, she was about to return the precious relic to its former station, when unfortunately it slipped out of her fingers, and strewed the seat with a thousand fragments. Moore, somewhere, when speaking of a vase in which roses had been distilled, says—

"You may break, you may ruin the vase as you will,

Yet the scent of the roses will hang round it still."

Though perhaps distilled whiskey may not have such an effect on glass bottles, in the instance I have mentioned the perfume was extremely powerful. But, to my ride—right opposite to me sat a man, who I at first sight supposed to be one of our country graziers; not that he wore either "top boots" or "sham tops," as the English farmers do, but, from having on a very old hat, and a suit of clothes which had certainly seen many better days.—"What an alteration fifteen years make, and it is just fifteen years since I was in this neighbourhood before," said this stranger, addressing himself to me, as we drove through the northern suburbs of the city. Having bowed assent, and enquired whether during that time he had resided in a foreign land, I found that he had just returned from America; and perceiving him to be a well informed, intelligent man, and being myself anxious for information as to the propriety of emigrating to that country, I endeavoured to elicit his opinions on the subject. He assured me that the ideas entertained by the generality of our countrymen of being able to realize a fortune in America at the present moment, or for a considerable time past, is a mere *ignis fatuus*—that after fifteen years experience and observation, he felt satisfied that it was just as easy to make money by industry and exertion in any of these islands, as it is in America.

He described the situation of the greater number of persons who lately emigrated from these kingdoms, as were ched in the extreme. That on their arrival in the United States, 99 out of every 100 of those who were even comfortable farmers here, were obliged to turn labourers; and that in many instances he has known them to be in a state of perfect starvation.

For the information of any of your readers who may have an intention of emigrating, I may observe, he mentioned that land in any way contiguous to the great towns or seaports, could not be obtained, except at their very highest value—and that in consequence, those who now go out are obliged to settle very far back in the country—that if they have as much money remaining after the expenses of travelling, perhaps thousands of miles, as will purchase some ground that has been cleared, or will maintain them until they can clear it themselves, and will afterwards buy sufficient to stock their farm, they may then expect to be very comfortable, for having no rent to pay, and the taxes being as yet comparatively tri-

pling, when they can once get properly settled on their farms, they certainly enjoy an independence unknown to the middling classes in this country—"but," said he, "if those who intend to emigrate, only knew one half of the obstacles they have to surmount before they can obtain their object—and the many chances of their never being able to attain it, they would scarcely ever think of emigrating to the United States."

Having asked if it were his intention to return—he replied, "that having a wife and family settled there, in one of the principal towns, he must return; but that had he known as much of the real situation of America before he had at first emigrated, as he does at present, he certainly never would have left this country."

As we drew nigh to our first stage or resting place, we were met by a party of the most miserable looking beings I ever beheld. On inquiry we found them to be a set of Irish labourers who landed early that morning somewhere on the neighbouring coast, on their return from England, where they had been getting in the harvest. Bare-footed, and bare-legged, with scarcely as many tatters hung round them as covered their naked limbs; some of them, in fact, *sans culottes*; with misery and wretchedness pictured in their countenances, these "sons of the sod" trudged along their weary way, having more the appearance of a set of malefactors, going to execution, than of men returning to their wives and families. Well, thought I, it is little wonder that the English should form a very dreadful idea of the Irish nation, while they have annually before them such specimens as these—and represent the peasants of the country as a set of the most barbarous wretches that ever disgraced the human character.—"What a set of knowing rascals, these here fellows are," said our overgrown coachman, turning round to the gentleman who sat behind him, "there be's not one of these lazy lubbers who has not got now in his pockets at least five or six sovereigns; and yet they will all beg their way home; and if they can't get anything for begging, they will, d'ye see, sooner fast until they get home, although that were fifty or sixty miles, than they will change one of them to buy food." "And pray," said I, what do they do with their money when they get home?" "I'm sure I s'e doesn't know—but we think as how they must drink it." "My good fellow," said a plain countryman who was sitting next him, "you know little about it; it is true enough they have in all probability four or five sovereigns a piece, and it is also true, that they will not change one of them, even to purchase the necessary subsistence; but believe me, it is not for drink they are saving it; it is to pay the rent of their cabin and quarter ground, which they know very well would be taken from them on their return, if they were a shilling deficient, and that they would consequently be left without a roof to shelter them from the 'peltings of the pitiless storm,' during the winter: 'Humph,' replied Coachee, 'you here Irish are always complaining—in England, I always finds the labourer as well off as the master, but I s'e don't know how you tries to manage; since I came here, I have never been in want.'" "Very likely," replied the countryman, "but how would you manage if you got nothing to do? These poor fellows, it is more than probable, live sixty or eighty miles in the interior of the country, and after walking that distance, to some part of the coast where they could get a bullock boat to take them across to England, and after walking perhaps as far again into the interior of the country to get work, and laboured there for two or three months, as hard as any of your English horses, have proved that it is not through inclination they idle, but from pure necessity; and I can tell you my good man, that if your English labourers were only obliged to undergo the one-half of the miseries which our Irish labourers are, there would in a very short time be ten times as many atrocities committed in England as are in this country."

Our country friend had just ended his remarks when one of the opposition coaches passed us with the rapidity of a sun-beam, which instantly changed the discourse to the improval and superior state of travelling in Ireland. The English have been ever ready to caricature us, Sir, and some of our Irish friends are ready to join them. The caricature of Irish posting by an Irish novelist is well known, but we seldom find them telling any thing that is

good of us; and certainly if they were so disposed, they would now have a fine subject in the present excellent condition of our roads, in the generality of our mail and stage conveyances, as there cannot be better travelling in any country than there is in Ireland at present; and comparatively speaking, not one half of the accidents occur in our mail and stage coach conveyances that do in England. Were English travellers aware of this, and of the many fine scenes which are to be met with in the country, and in some way certain that they would not be murdered while coming here, I have no doubt we should have many more from England and Scotland, now that the conveyance by steam across the water is so cheap, and at the same time so expeditious and so certain. As nothing very material occurred during our next stage, and as I have at present given your readers quantum sufficit of my rambles for one number of your journal, I shall defer the remainder till a future opportunity. And am, Sir, yours, &c.,

ROBIN RUNABOUT

SIMPLE SCIENCE—LEAD.

Lead is the softest of all the metals; it is malleable and ductile, but possesses so little tenacity that a wire of the one hundred and twentieth part of an inch is not capable of supporting more than eighteen pounds weight without breaking. Lead and many of its uses were known to the ancients, but it was not thought, until chemical research discovered it, that it was poisonous. So far from entertaining this idea, the Romans in the time of Augustus, conveyed the water for their city in leaden pipes, without imagining that such a conveyance rendered it unwholesome; and so lately as 1783, there was a treatise printed, recommending the use of lead to preserve wines from acidity.

Although lead has the property of imparting a saccharine taste to substances with which it is mixed, some of our wine merchants little suspected, when they contaminated their wines with it, that they were distributing a slow poison to their customers. Vats of lead have been used in some cider counties, and have produced incalculable mischief. What is called the Devonshire colic, is occasioned by this practice, and is identified with the colic of the plumbers, painters, and white-lead manufacturers. A person may satisfy himself of the unwholesome nature of leaden cisterns to hold water for culinary purposes, by examining the internal surface of such vessels; for if the water has stood in them for several days undisturbed, a small coating of white oxide will be observed just at the upper edge of the water. On every fresh addition of water this oxide is washed off, and if there be the slightest degree of acidity in the vessel, it will be dissolved in the water, and thus an insidious poison will be conveyed into the stomach. The Romans sheathed the bottom of their ships with this metal, fastened by nails made of bronze; and in a state of ceruse, it was in great respect among their ladies as a cosmetic.

Lead is eleven and a half times heavier than water, and is found abundantly in Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, Derbyshire, and Ireland, and many other parts of the world. It is usually alloyed with a portion of silver, and in the primitive slate mountains, from fifty to one hundred and fifty ounces of silver are generally found in a ton of lead. It is employed to cover buildings and mixed with antimony forms printer's types. From it is manufactured many useful pigments, the most noted of which, is the white lead used in painting: the manufacture of this article is conducted in the following manner: a number of earthen crucibles holding from three to six quarts each, nearly filled with vinegar, in hot-beds of tan, and upon these crucibles thin sheets of lead rolled up in coils are placed, one coil over each crucible. The heat of the bed occasions the vinegar to rise in vapour, and this attaches itself to, and combines with the lead, forming a white crust of considerable depth; at a certain time this is scraped off and the coils of lead replaced: in this manner the operation goes on until all the metal is used—the produce is afterwards ground and washed for sale.

Sheet lead is made by suffering the melted metal to run out of a box through a long horizontal slit, upon a table prepared for the purpose, while the box is drawn by appropriate ropes and pulleys along the table, leaving the

melted lead behind it in the desired form to congeal. The lead thus cast is passed between two iron rollers, placed at such a distance from each other as will reduce the lead to the desired thickness.

Lead is used in the finer kind of glass, in order to make it bear sudden changes of heat and cold better; also to give it a proper degree of weight, a susceptibility of being cut without breaking, a greater power of refracting rays of light, and a capacity to bear a higher polish. Notwithstanding, lead is seldom used in plate or crown glass, as it always renders glass softer and more liable to be defaced by hard substances.

The manufacture of small shot is curious. In melting the lead a small quantity of arsenic is used, which disposes it to run into spherical drops. When melted it is poured into a cylinder whose circumference is pierced with holes; the lead streaming through the holes divide into drops, which fall into water where they congeal.—They are not all spherical, therefore, those that are, must be separated by an ingenious contrivance. The whole is sifted on the upper end of a long smooth inclined plane, and the grains roll down to the lower end. But the pear-like shape of the bad grains, makes them roll down irregularly, and they waddle as it were to one side, while the round ones run straight down, and are afterwards sorted into various sizes with sieves. The manufacturers of the patent shot have fixed their furnace at the top of a tower one hundred feet high, and so procure a much greater number of spherical grains by letting the melted lead fall into water from this height, as the shot is gradually cooled before it reaches the water.

E. B.

HIGHLAND HEROISM.

Roderick Mackenzie, a young gentleman of the north of Scotland, nearly of the same age with Prince Charles, and who strongly resembled him in person, was one of the many who knew of the Pretender's retreats, while the British government set a price upon his head, and the British soldiers hunted him through the realms of his fathers; and he was one of the few who were permitted to continue in his train, and who assisted in his numerous escapes. One day while the prince was sitting with his little band of faithful friends, in a highland cottage, the alarm was given that troops were closing around it. Escape was impossible, but he was forcibly carried by the party into a hiding place, and young Mackenzie remained firm in his stead. When the soldiers had burst the door, he rose, and walked calmly up to them, saying "I know whom you want—there—stab the son of your King!"—and he threw his plaid off his breast. Their swords were instantly through his gallant heart! They hacked off his head, threw it into a sack, and set off to present it, a meet and acceptable offering to their Duke. At Edinburgh, it was thought proper to ascertain that it was really the prince's head, and Robert Morrison, his barber, was sent for to identify it. Fainting with horror, the poor man was shown this shocking spectacle. After examining it, he became satisfied, that it was not the head of his master; but, he had the presence of mind to conceal his feelings, and said, that although he was not able to swear to the identity of the head, in that situation, the resemblance was so strong, no person could doubt that it was the head of Prince Charles. This evidence satisfied the butchers for the time; and, the fury of the pursuit abating, the prince escaped to France. What his feelings were on returning from his hiding place in the hut, and finding the mangled body of his friend, generous hearts may imagine, but few would be able to describe.

An anecdote is told of General Wolfe, that he was out with a party of friends in a boat, the day before the battle of Quebec. It was a beautiful summer's evening, and the conversation turned to Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," which was just then published. Wolfe repeated the lines, "For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey," &c. with enthusiasm, and said, "I would rather be the author of those lines than beat the French to-morrow." He did beat the French, and was himself killed the next day.